Abraham Lincoln: Discovering an Iconic President

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Overview

Many third grade students know of Abraham Lincoln as one of our presidents. His face is on the penny and five-dollar bill, he appears in “Presidents’ Day” sales commercials, and his face is carved in Mount Rushmore. However, few students know of his contributions such as the Emancipation Proclamation, Gettysburg Address, and the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution with the abolition of slavery for African-Americans. This unit will enlighten students on the background of Abraham Lincoln along with introductions of how the American government is run. Lessons in this unit are based on skills that third grade students are expected to learn. I have decided to teach the skill by way of the United States Government and our 16th president.

Rationale

As a third grade teacher in the city of Philadelphia, I find that this age group, 8 and 9 year olds, are fascinated with presidents and Abraham Lincoln in particular. This seminar, From Slavery to Civil Rights and my research have guided me along the path of reasons why Abraham Lincoln is this iconic figure. The readings and primary documents that I read have enlightened me. Reading about the Black Codes and Confederate State laws encouraged me to delve deep into other historical documents. Tracking Abraham Lincoln’s life and the timeline of the war along with the events surrounding it, really gave me the reassurance that this unit was necessary. I would like my students and other third graders within the School District of Philadelphia to have the same opportunity to discover Lincoln. Every student should identify the time period of the Civil War, and the reasons why it took place. Because of this war, Lincoln became one of the most famous, if not the most famous president in our country’s history. With the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation just behind us and the 150th anniversary of Lincoln’s
Gettysburg Address in the near future, there is no better time to write a unit that would address various parts of Lincoln’s life, as a child, lawyer, and politician.

The following lessons were designed for the third grade level but can be differentiated with little alterations. Because most third grades are self-contained classrooms, I have created lessons from several disciplines. Social studies, reading, and writing are all a part of this unit. These lessons also fit in with the school district’s core curriculum, which is aligned to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards (Appendix A).

**Background**

After being selected for the seminar, “From Slavery to Civil Rights”, I was eager to begin this journey with my fellow School District of Philadelphia colleagues. The topic was broad and I knew it would cover an enormous amount of information. I, however, did not anticipate my own fascination with Abraham Lincoln. Right at the start, after reading Lincoln’s first Inauguration speech, I became aware of the indifference Lincoln might have had with slavery. The idea that he was not always a proponent for the abolishment of slavery in all states was shocking to me. In his own words, “I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so” (Lincoln, on the Web. 12 May 2013 (par.4).

These words did not make sense to me. This is not what I recall of how Abraham Lincoln ever felt. I later would learn the uphill battle he would face while in office during his first term and his desire to be reelected. I also found myself analyzing Lincoln’s other historical speeches. His Gettysburg Address, though short (10 sentences) and from the heart, is what I recollected from my childhood lessons on Lincoln. It is in this address that I became aware of his eloquent words of wisdom, which has become “… the most famous speech in American history” Sullivan (2000). “Four score and seven years ago,” (Sullivan, 93) has become a satire of speeches, political and the like.

The Emancipation Proclamation, which I found to be a daring decision as the Commander in Chief, is another speech that I recall reading but not so much understanding as a child. The idea that Lincoln declared the end of slavery in 1862 before the 13th Amendment made it official, concurs my initial opinion of him, he was not going to allow slavery continue while in the office of President of the United States.

**Objectives**

My goal throughout this unit is for the students to understand why our 16th president became the most recognized president in the history of the United States. In addition, students will learn of Abraham Lincoln’s accomplishments before, during, and the short time after the Civil War.

Students will be able to master the following objectives throughout this unit.
Students will be able to read and create a timeline of Abraham Lincoln

Students will be able to write an opinion paper to Abraham Lincoln in the form of a letter including the 5 parts; date, greeting, body, closing, signature

Students will identify the 3 branches of government with a focus on the executive branch and the powers of the president

Students will identify how an amendment gets passed with a focus on the 13th Amendment

Students will design a memorial or monument for Abraham Lincoln after examining the other memorials dedicated to him

Students will create a holiday with a patriotic theme for Abraham Lincoln

Students will compare and contrast 2 presidents; Abraham Lincoln and Barack Obama

Strategies

For most lessons in this unit, cooperative grouping, partnerships, and independent learning will take place. The following strategies are interwoven throughout this unit.

KWL

The KWL chart is the first activity in this unit. This strategy is important at the beginning of a new lesson, chapter, or unit because it is ongoing throughout the unit. KWL is a great tool when you need to assess students’ prior knowledge before starting a lesson or unit. The “K” in the chart represents what the students Know about a specific topic. Students brainstorm and jot down information that is prior knowledge. The “W” in the chart is for what they Want to know. Some information in the K section of the chart will intrigue students and then have them asking questions about what else there is to know about the topic. This Want section may also drive your instruction. Students yearning for information will guide you knowingly or unknowingly down an inquisitive path. The “L” in the KWL chart represents what was Learned during this unit. This section of the chart will be completed during and upon the unit’s completion.

Think-Pair-Share

Another strategy that will be utilized during this unit is Think-Pair-Share. For this strategy, the teacher will pose a question or topic for students to ponder. Once the teacher gives the information, students think on their own for a minute or so, then turn to their partner to share their thoughts or ideas for the next two to three minutes. This is a short activity that engages all students and relieves the pressure of a student who may not feel comfortable answering questions before the whole class.

Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers are used for all subjects in this unit. In order for students to organize their information, this tool is essential. While the third grade student learns to write well-
developed paragraphs, letters, and essays, graphic organizers become an important part of the writing process. These graphic organizers help students think in an orderly fashion. These thoughts are then transcended on to published writings.

Signals

Classroom management is crucial for any lesson to be successful. My students were taught in the beginning of the year to show hand signals when I pose a question to the class as a whole. Questions that require a “yes”, “no”, or “I am not sure”, response can be put forth and answered by the entire class when using signals. This give me the teacher a quick glance as to where the students are in comprehending a subject or simply answering a survey question.

Classroom Activities

Lesson 1

Introductory to Abraham Lincoln Unit

Objective: Students will share prior knowledge of our 16th president, Abraham Lincoln.

Materials:

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Timer (Promethean Board)
- KWL graphic organizer (Appendix B)

Duration: 30 minutes

Procedure: Introduce the KWL Chart with the title Abraham Lincoln. Remind students that the K is what they want to know, the W is for what they want to know, and the L represents what they have learned after completing the unit. Allow students to have conversation about Abraham Lincoln for approximately 5 minutes. Use a timer to keep students focused and on task. When timed is up, begin asking students what they know by asking for raised quiet hands. Once a student gives information of what they know about Abraham Lincoln, ask other students to show a yes, no, or I do not know signal as to whether or not they knew of that fact. List all facts about Abraham Lincoln in the K column. At this time, students will copy the information on their own KWL graphic organizer (Appendix B). Depending on the size, your class will may get 15 to 20 facts. These facts will encourage other students to start thinking about what they want to know. Give students approximately 3 minutes to discuss their curiosities about Abraham Lincoln. Use the timer once again to keep students on task and focused. When time is up, have students share what they want to learn about Abraham Lincoln. Record all questions in the W column of the KWL Chart. Encourage students to research or bring in materials
that may help the class with this KWL Chart. Post the Chart in the classroom to remind students about the ongoing unit and have them place their KWL graphic organizer in their social studies folder for quick reference.

Lesson 2

Objective: Students will read and create a timeline.

Materials:

- *What Lincoln Said* by Sarah L. Thomson
- Horizons: People and Communities- Harcourt School Publishers
- Timeline template (Appendix C)
- Social studies notebook
- Chart paper
- Straightedge
- Markers

Duration: 45 minutes

Procedure: Have students look at the classroom schedule, the bell schedule, and the number line to see how information is presented in sequential order. Ask students if they have ever seen a timeline. What information was given? Was it about a person, an event, an era, the history of inventions, and history of wars? Have students read the Timeline of Germantown History on page 54 and 55 of their Horizons social studies textbook.

Review with the whole class that all timelines have a title, beginning period, and ending period both that are evenly proportioned. Ask students to practice the skill of reading a timeline. Refer to the 3 questions on page 55. After reading, remind students of our Abraham Lincoln Unit. Have students take out their social studies notebook and prepare to record information about Abraham Lincoln as you read aloud *What Lincoln Said* by Sarah L. Thomson to them. Remind them that information recorded will be used to create a timeline within their small groups.

Read *What Lincoln Said*. Adjust your reading rate so students have ample time to record information. Show all illustrations so students can get a visual of the time period in Abraham Lincoln’s life.

Before handing out chart paper, allow students to use the Think-Pair-Share strategy. They will do this with their facts that they recorded in the notebook. The timeline may be formatted horizontally or vertically. Each group will be required to list 10 events in a timeline for Abraham Lincoln from 1809 through 1865. Each group should have 4 to 6 students, allowing each student to contribute at least 2 facts. Once they have decided on their 10 facts, chart paper and straightedges will be available to create the Abraham
Lincoln Timeline. Groups will share out and may have a one reporter from the group or each student may share their specific facts.

Students will receive a timeline template to complete for homework. The title will be the student and they will have to list 5 major events from their life.

Lesson 3

Objective: Students will write a letter with an opinion. The letter must have 5 parts: date, greeting, body, closing, and signature.

Materials:

- *Abe Lincoln: The Boy Who Loved Books* by Kay Winters
- Outline of letter writing (Appendix D)
- Writing paper
- Whiteboard slates (one for each student)
- Dry erase marker

Duration: 45 minutes

Procedure: Write the following sentences on the promethean board.

1. Today is (insert date).
2. I love reading about presidents!
3. My favorite president is George Washington.
4. Abraham Lincoln is the 16th President of the United States.
5. Each president has a vice president to help him with the Executive Office.
6. A president’s term is for 4 years.

Have students underline the facts and circle the opinions for each number on their whiteboards and hold them up to show the teacher. Assess student’s prior knowledge as you scan the room for answers. Review with the whole class that a fact can be proven while an opinion expresses one’s feelings and thoughts. Prepare the students to listen before you read *Abe Lincoln: The Boy Who Loved Books*. Ask whether the title states a fact or an opinion? Remind students that they should imagine living in the same time period as Lincoln. They should think of themselves as someone who might meet Lincoln as a child. Students will write a letter Lincoln voicing their opinion of his upbringing and his way of life. Post the outline of letter writing to remind students that every letter has 5 parts: date, greeting, body, closing, and signature. Students will proofread and edit each other’s letters. Finally, students will rewrite their final copy for a published writing piece.

Lesson 4

Objective: Students will identify and name the 3 branches of government.
Materials:

- *The Constitution of the United States* by Christine Taylor-Butler
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Checks and Balances flow chart of The 3 Branches of Government (Appendix E)
- Match the Branch worksheet (Appendix F)
- Graphics of The Capital, The White House, and The Supreme Court
- Emancipation Proclamation
  http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/emancipate.htm

Duration: 45 minutes

Procedure: In groups, student will brainstorm to name government officials. Introduce the 3 branches of government and have students guess which government official belongs in which branch. At this point place emphasis on The Executive Branch with an excerpt from Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation.

> And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

Use the Promethean Board to show the flipchart with pictures of all three buildings
http://www.usmint.gov/kids/games/branchesofpower/html/images/3b.jpg. Students will create a poster with facts and figures of the people employed by the government in each building and match the power to the branch (Appendix E).

Lesson 5

Objective: Students will describe how an amendment gets passed by acting it out.

Materials:

- The 3 Branches of Government Posters
- Checks and Balances Flow Chart of The 3 Branches of Government (Appendix E)
- Graphics of The Capital, The White House, and The Supreme Court
- 13th Amendment
Duration: 45 minutes

Procedure: Review the Bill of Rights with students as well as the 3 branches of government. Read *The Constitution of the United States: A True Book* with a focus on pages 20 – 24 where how an amendment gets passed is explained in detail. Follow up this reading with a look at the 13th Amendment. Analyze how President Lincoln had to obtain two-thirds of congress’ approval along with three-fourths of the states to pass. Divide the class into three groups. The Executive Branch, The Legislative Branch, and The Judicial Branch. Give each group the job descriptions for each branch. Hold a mock Congressional Assembly to try and pass an amendment. Give students 3 choices to chose from; 1) Presidential Candidates must take a lie detector test 2) Anyone from another country must pay a fee to become a United States citizen 3) Congress must work over holidays when trying to reach a balanced budget. Once students see the steps to passing an amendment, they will act out their parts and vote. To summarize the lesson, students will discuss the struggles Abraham Lincoln may have had in getting the 13th Amendment passed.

Lesson 6

Objective: Students will design a monument or memorial for a historical figure.

Materials:

- *The Lincoln Memorial* by Deborah Kent
- Poster board
- The Lincoln Memorial – Facts and Figures worksheet (Appendix H)

Duration: 45 minutes

Procedure: To introduce the lesson, show pictures from The Travel Channel Website [http://www.travelchannel.com/destinations/united-states/photos/us-memorials-and-monuments](http://www.travelchannel.com/destinations/united-states/photos/us-memorials-and-monuments) Ask students to identify the person or idea the memorial or monument is representing. After tapping into their prior knowledge, provide information on Abraham Lincoln’s monuments and memorials in photographs # 5, #7, and #12. Inform students that there are many others and encourage students to search for more. Display the slides from the website to show the importance of our 16th president. Read *The Lincoln Memorial: The Cornerstones of Freedom* and give examples of what each part of the Lincoln Memorial represents.

Next, tell students to think of a historical figure that they admire and believe to be worthy of a monument or memorial. Students will create and sketch a design that shows symbols
of the person they selected. Students will write a short persuasive paragraph stating why this historical figure deserves a memorial.

Lesson 7

Objective: Students will create a holiday with a patriotic theme for Abraham Lincoln.

Materials:
- Chart paper
- Drawing paper
- Markers/crayons

Duration: 45 minutes

Procedure: Check the students’ prior knowledge of the word patriotic. Ask each group to list as many patriotic holidays and why they became holidays on their chart paper. Have them divide holidays in two groups: One for holidays that were created for individuals and one for holidays that were created for an idea. Each group will list and illustrate as many holidays they can think of while focusing on the patriotic theme. Have each group share their work. If students fail to mention any of the following holidays, be sure to inform them of each one and ask why it’s a holiday. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Flay Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, and Veteran’s Day. After reviewing their work, have students think about Abraham Lincoln and create a special holiday for Abraham Lincoln alone. Students will have to support the holiday they created for Lincoln with 3 reasons why it became a holiday. Encourage students to use their imagination and feel free to come up with events that would make their holiday extra special. They should illustrate and color a type of patriotic symbol to go with their holiday on poster board.

Lesson 8

Objective: Students will compare and contrast Abraham Lincoln and Barack Obama.

Materials:
- Venn diagram (Appendix I)
- Encyclopedia of United States Presidents
- Presidents of the United States – Fast Fact Book
- Biography of Barack Obama by Stephen Krensky

Duration: 45 minutes

Procedure: Reintroduce the Venn diagram showing the similarities and difference of any given topic. Have students name as many presidents that they can. List them on the board
and afterwards have them place them in categories such dates, assassinations, current, past, recognizable, and so on. Let the students find these similarities and differences. Model the lesson by comparing and contrasting George Washington and George W. Bush. Involve students as you display the information on the flipchart of Promethean board. Give students the resources to find information on the following two presidents; Abraham Lincoln and Barack Obama. Similarities the students might know are; both are tall, senators from Illinois, beliefs of freedom, equal rights, and the bible that both used to be sworn in as President of the United States. Differences may include but not limited to are; race, Obama has 2 daughters and Lincoln had 4 sons, and Obama attended universities while Lincoln was self-taught. Students will write a compare and contrast paper with the Venn diagram as a guide.

Lesson 9

Objective: Students will summarize the Abraham Lincoln Unit by completing the “L” section of the KWL answering what they Learned during the unit.

Materials:

- KWL Chart
- KWL graphic organizer (Appendix B)
- Markers
- Social Studies folder

Duration: 30 minutes

Procedure: Students will review the information they placed on the KWL chart. Some information in the “K” column may be omitted if the students find it to be inaccurate. A check will be added if the information was in fact true. Next, the “W” column of what the students wanted to know will be address one by one. After each question, the teacher writes the answer in the “L” column for what was learned. Other information that may not have been asked in the “W” column may also be added to the “L” column.
Annotated Bibliography

This Scholastic book has illustrations and a timeline that shows Lincoln’s achievements.

The textbook has a wealth of information that scans centuries of American history. It is in chapter 5 that supports lesson 4 of this unit identifying the 3 branches of government. There is a graphic organizer that displays the checks and balances of how our government runs.

This book is a great source of information about the Lincoln Memorial. The photographs, glossary, and timeline all enhance the facts and figures displayed in the book. The history of the memorial is given along with all historical events that took place at this location.

This biography of President Barack Obama has information from birth through 2010. There are many photographs and a timeline for quick reference about the first African-American President of the United States. In chapter 11, there is reference to Abraham Lincoln and how Barack Obama announced his candidacy for president at the very place in Illinois where Lincoln announced his run for the senate.


George Sullivan’s book is a great reference for a young student to learn about the life of Lincoln. It goes into detail about what the president said while running the country, while describing the difference between a primary source and secondary source. It gives a good insight as to who Lincoln was. There is a timeline that is helpful for younger students. The last chapter tells how Lincoln is remembered with monuments, currency, county names, books, and a plethora of others memorials.
This kid-friendly book explains what the Constitution is all about including, the framers who wrote it, our government structure, the Bill of Rights, and how amendments get passed. There are statistics at the end of the book and other resources that help children find information about The Constitution of the United States.

This book is a short story that has quotes from Abraham Lincoln and is told in chronological order. The actual quotes are in red text. There is a timeline at the end of the book. The illustrations are large, which make for a great read aloud.

In this book, the author focuses on Abraham Lincoln’s childhood. It shares information about his life in the wilderness and how he loved to read more than anything else.

Websites
Lincoln, Abraham – Emancipation Proclamation
http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/emancipate.htm
Lincoln, Abraham – First Inaugural Address
This website has all presidents, up to date, inaugural speeches.

U.S. Memorials and Monuments
This site has great photographs of historical from around the world.

United States Mint
The following websites are a valuable resource for locating graphic organizers that assist with collecting data and/or information.

Checks and Balances Flow Chart of The Branches of Government

Friendly Letter Format
Venn Diagram
http://www.docstoc.com/docs/4213336/Venn-Diagram-Character-Name-Use-the-Venn-diagram-to

KWL Chart

Timeline Template
http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-W-GTrXhscx8/Ts8f6gQzmWI/AAAAAAAAACQ/-G023PIwOrw/s1600/BlankTimeline1.jpg
Appendices-Standards

Standards

The following standards, which are aligned with the School District of Philadelphia’s Core Curriculum, are present throughout this unit. Reading, Writing, and History Standards are listed below.

Reading Independently

- 1.1.3.A Identify the author’s purpose and type using grade level text.

Reading, Analyzing, and Interpret Text

- 1.2.3.B Differentiate fact from opinion.
- 1.2.3.D Make inferences from text when studying a topic (e.g., science, social studies) and draw conclusions, citing evidence from the text to support answers.

Types of Writing

- 1.4.3.B Write informational pieces using illustrations when relevant (e.g., descriptions, letters, reports, instructions).

Quality of Writing

- 1.5.3.C Organizing writings in logic order – Including a beginning, middle and end.
- 1.5.3.F Use grade appropriate conventions of language when writing and editing.
  - Spell common frequently used word correctly
  - Use capital letters correctly
  - Punctuate correctly
  - Use correct grammar and sentence structure.

Statistics and Data Analysis

- 2.6.3.C Describe data displayed in a diagram (e.g., Venn), a graph, or a table.
- 2.3.3.D Analyze data shown in tables, charts, diagrams and graphs; compare the data from 2 categories displayed in a graph and compare representations of a set of data in different graphs.

Historical Analysis and Skills Development
✓ 8.1.2.A Identify the difference between past, present, and future using timelines and/or other graphic representations.
✓ 8.1.3.B Identify fact, opinion, multiple points of view, and primary sources as related to historical events.
✓ 8.1.3.C Conduct teacher guided inquiry on assigned topics using specified historical sources (Reference RWSL Standard 1.8.3 Research)

United States History

✓ 8.3.3.A Identify and describe the social, political, cultural, and economic contributions of individuals and groups in United States history.
✓ 8.3.3.B Identify and describe historical documents, artifacts, and places critical to United States history.
✓ 8.3.3.C Demonstrate an understanding of how people in different times and places view the world.
✓ 8.3.3.D Identify and describe how conflict and cooperation among groups and organizations have impacted the history and development of the United States.
  • Ethnicity and race
  • Working conditions
  • Immigration
  • Military conflict
  • Economic stability

✓ 8.4.3.D Identify conflict and cooperation among groups and organizations from around the world.
Appendix B

Name ___________________________________________ Date _______________________

**KWL Chart**

Before you begin your research, list details in the first two columns. Fill in the last column after completing your research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>What I Know</th>
<th>What I Want to Know</th>
<th>What I Learned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix C

Timeline
The System of Checks and Balances

Executive (President)

Legislative (Congress)

Judicial (Courts)
The Lincoln Memorial – Facts and Figures

1. Henry Bacon designs the Lincoln Memorial.
2. Construction begins on the Lincoln Memorial in 1914.
3. Lincoln Memorial is completed and dedicated in 1922.
4. The structure is 122 feet high.
5. The 36 columns represent the states of the Union when Lincoln died in 1865.
6. Above the columns are the names of the 48 states when the memorial was built.
7. Daniel Chester French sculpted the statue of Lincoln.
8. Lincoln is seated in a chair.
9. The height of this statue is 19ft high.
10. Lincoln’s left hand is clenched to signify his power as president.
11. Lincoln’s right hand is open symbolizing his compassion.
12. Fifty thousand people show up for the dedication of the memorial.
13. In 1939, opera singer Marian Anderson is not allowed to perform at the Constitution Hall because of her color. She is invited to perform on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.
14. Martin Luther King, Jr. gives his “I Have A Dream” speech before a crowd of 200,000.
## Match The Branch of Government to the Power it Holds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Power held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Branch</td>
<td>Vetoes acts of Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appoints federal judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impeaches federal judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Branch</td>
<td>Approves federal judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Calls Congress into special session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impeaches the President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial Branch</td>
<td>Overrides vetoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Declares laws unconstitutional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Declares executive acts unconstitutional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Venn Diagram (Character)

Name ______________________

Use the Venn diagram to write words and phrases to describe and compare the looks, personality, and behavior of two characters (and anything else you know about them). Write their names in the boxes.